

# Mohawks open season at home tonight

By JEREMY KOENIGS  
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**MASON CITY** — The Mohawk Hockey Club opens its 2008-09 Midwest High School Hockey League season tonight against the Des Moines Oak Leafs at 7:15 p.m. at the North Iowa Ice Arena.

For coach Mark Hicks, there's a lot of new faces on the Mohawks' varsity roster after the loss of a strong senior class that included four of the top 15 scorers — Ben Juhnke, Chris Jessen, Ben Wagner and Spenser Poppinga — in the league last season.

"Every year we know we'll have to replace guys, so we look into that and see what we're going to do," Hicks said. "We start with the mindset of, 'We go with what we've got.' I think we have a good group of kids.

"Any time you lose a big class, it's tough to replace them. We try not to think about that, try not to dwell on that. We're focused on what we have, which is a good nucleus of kids that work hard."

The youthful Mohawks, who were 21-14-1-0 last season, have three seniors on their roster this — Jake Taylor, Levi Lancaster and Jared Rosendahl.



Hicks

Taylor, a 6-foot, 175-pound forward, scored 17 goals and added 19 assists for the Mohawk junior varsity last season, helping the team to the league championship game.

Taylor said it'll be hard to replace last year's seniors, but that he is ready to take over a leadership role.

"With the team we have, we'll be fine," Taylor said. "As a senior, it's my job to keep the team together and focus on accomplishing everything as a whole."

The Mohawks also return juniors Ethan Tindall and Will Martin, who saw varsity action last year and three junior goaltenders in Max Lassise, Drake Lundeen and Andrew Wuttke that will be vying for playing time.

Lassise went 10-5-1 with a goals against average of 2.14 and save percentage of .885, Lundeen was 8-9-0 with a 2.65 goals against average and .870 save percentage while Wuttke was 3-0-0 with a 0.33 goals against average and .938 save percentage.

"We have three goalies that will be fighting for varsity time," Hicks said. "We have Will Martin and Ethan Tindall who saw varsity action and will be counted on to be team leaders. The rest of the team saw a little bit of varsity action, but mostly played JV, so it'll be a different mix of guys.

"We have some guys that can put the puck in the net, some guys that are physical, others that are defensive-minded. It'll be a good mix having them all together."

Taylor believes that with last year's success of the junior varsity team along with hard work, goals for the team are high.

"We have good players," he said. "It's going to take everyone filling their role. I think we can go all the way. It's just

a matter of hard work and determination. Hard work will do us good."

The hard work in pre-season practices will be tested right away against the three-time defending league champion Oak Leafs.

"I think it's great for us to start out with a team that's the team to beat," Hicks said. "They've won the league championship the last three years. It'll show us what we need to do if we want to be champions."

## 2008-09 MOHAWK HOCKEY CLUB SCHEDULE

**NOVEMBER**  
Tonight — vs. Des Moines Oak Leafs, 7:15 p.m.; 7 — vs. Quad Cities, 8 p.m.; 8 — vs. Quad Cities, 8:30 p.m.; 14 — vs. Des Moines Capitals, 8 p.m.; 15 — at Omaha, 4:15 p.m.; 16 — at Omaha, 1:30 p.m.; 21 — vs. Des Moines Capitals, 7:30 p.m.; 22 — vs. Des Moines Capitals, 7:30 p.m.; 23 — vs. Cedar Rapids, 10:45 a.m.; 26 — at Ames, 8:15 p.m.; 29 — vs. Lincoln, 7:15 p.m.; 30 — vs. Lincoln, 11 a.m.

**DECEMBER**  
6 — at Sioux City, 4:45 p.m.; 7 — at Sioux City, 11:30 a.m.; 11 — at Waterloo, 6 p.m.; 13 — at Kansas City Outlaws, 6:50 p.m.; 14 — at Kansas City Outlaws, 9 a.m.; 19 — vs. Ames, 8 p.m.; 20 — vs. Tri-City, 4:30 p.m.; 21 — vs. Tri-City, 11 a.m.

**JANUARY**  
13 — at Waterloo, 6 p.m.; 16 — vs. Des Moines Oak Leafs, 8 p.m.; 23 — at Quad Cities, 8 p.m.; 31 — vs. Ames, 4:30 p.m.

**FEBRUARY**  
6 — at Cedar Rapids, 7:45 p.m.; 7 — at Dubuque, 7 p.m.; 8 — at Dubuque, 11 a.m.; 12 — vs. Waterloo, 7:45 p.m.; 14 — vs. Dubuque, 8:30 p.m.; 20 — vs. Cedar Rapids, 8 p.m.; 21 — vs. Kansas City Stars, 7:15 p.m.; 22 — vs. Kansas City Stars, 11 a.m.